

TED4054  
ACTION SCA-00

INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	INL-00	DOEE-00
	DOTE-00	PDI-00	DS-00	EAP-00	DHSE-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00
	FBIE-00	VCI-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	MOFM-00
	MOF-00	VCIE-00	NEA-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00	NIMA-00	PM-00
	GIWI-00	SCT-00	ISNE-00	DOHS-00	FMPC-00	SP-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	NCTC-00	ASDS-00	SCRS-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00
	DRL-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	FA-00	SRAP-00	SWCI-00	/000W

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5818  
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY  
CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
OSAF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
USCINCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 002672

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/04/2019  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MILITARY MAKING SLOW BUT DELIBERATE  
PROGRESS IN SOUTH WAZIRISTAN

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 2591  
[1](#)B. ISLAMABAD 2607

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b) (d)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Summary: Pakistani ground forces appear to be making slow but deliberate progress in their campaign against the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in South Waziristan. In recent days, the Army has been securing the ground it occupies, and on November 3, the 14th Division advanced into the key town of Sora Rogha. The military has publicly reported 34 soldiers dead and 99 wounded through November 3. The TTP claims that it has vacated territory rather than engaging the military, and is luring the Army into a trap. Septel will report on IDPs from South Waziristan. End Summary.

THREE DIVISIONS CONTINUE OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS  
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[1](#)2. (S/NF) Elements of three Pakistani infantry divisions - the 14th, 9th, and 7th - are continuing offensive operations against Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants in South Waziristan (Reftel A, Reftel B). Each division is conducting operations along an axis of advance toward the presumed ultimate objective of the TTP strongholds of Makin and Ladha. Air strikes continue at a high rate, and appear to be focused on the Makin and Ladha areas.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) Units of the 14th Division advancing from the southeast entered Sora Rogha (also known as Sararogha) on November 3. The bulk of the 14th division remains several kilometers south of Sora Rogha poised to attack. Armor and infantry units continue to move north of Kotkai and heavy artillery has been deployed in significant numbers to support an imminent attack.

[1](#)4. (S/NF) In the west, 9th Division armor and infantry units are continuing clearing operations in the town of Kaniguram. Units have seized the town of Karama three miles east of

Kaniguram as well as the high ground between Kaniguram and Karama. Some units reportedly have taken Kaniguram Fort, one mile north of Kaniguram.

¶5. (S/NF) Meanwhile, infantry and tanks of the 7th Division, situated in the north, continue to conduct clearing operations south of Razmak and have secured an axis of advance and adjacent towns and villages. Units have seized the towns of Laghar Manza and Tauda China, positioning the division to continue to move toward Makin. Infantry units are reportedly securing ridgelines near Tauda China and are massing armor and mechanized infantry within one mile of Makin in preparation for an assault against it. This positioning reflects an overarching strategy used by the Pakistan military, which Post's sources have described as "take the high ground, then move into town."

#### MILITARY REPORTS LOW CASUALTIES

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¶6. (U) The military's public relations service, ISPR, reported that from the beginning of the South Waziristan campaign on October 17 through November 3, 34 soldiers have been killed and 99 wounded, while the military has killed 353 militants/terrorists. According to ISPR figures, the military's losses have been declining since the first days of the campaign. In the past seven days, the military claims to have lost just six soldiers.

#### MILITANTS CLAIM THEIR STRATEGY SUCCESSFUL

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¶7. (U) On November 2, a Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) spokesman denied to the media that the Army had defeated TTP militants in any battlefield engagements in South Waziristan. Rather, he insisted, the TTP had vacated the territory the Army occupied. He explained that this was a TTP strategy to lure the Army into a trap -) i.e., to get the military to overextend its supply lines through difficult and insecure terrain so that the TTP can interdict its lines of communication and isolate the Army divisions in winter camp. He also claimed that only 11 TTP militants had thus far been killed during the military's ground campaign.

¶8. (S/NF) Comment: Past experience from the Swat campaign indicates that the Pakistan military tends to under-report its own casualties by anywhere from one third to one half, while over-reporting militant casualties. That said, the relatively low and declining number of military casualties could also indicate that there is little fighting currently going on -) i.e., that the militants are avoiding direct confrontation and melting away. This could explain the military's strategy of advancing slowly, ensuring that ground taken is secured and that its lines of communication remain uninterrupted.

PATTERSON